# BACHELOR'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT
## PPE – Bachelor's in Politics, Philosophy and Economics
## Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

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| **Thesis title:** | **Türkiye in NATO: a Backsliding Ally or A Valuable Ally in Distress ?** |
| **Student's name:** | **Veli Uygar ÖZENER** |
| **Referee's name:** | **Pelin Ayan Musil, PhD** |

| Criteria | Definition | Maximum | Points |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Major Criteria** | | | |
| | Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality) | **50** | 40 |
| | Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses) | **15** | 13 |
| | Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question) | **15** | 5 |
| *Total* | | *80* | 58 |
| **Minor Criteria** | | | |
| | Sources, literature | **10** | 5 |
| | Presentation (language, style, cohesion) | **5** | 4 |
| | Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures) | **5** | 4 |
| *Total* | | *20* | 13 |
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| **TOTAL** | | *100* | 71 |

**Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria:**

I have read this thesis with great interest. The thesis primarily asks the question of whether Turkey is a valuable ally for NATO, or it is not. It argues that, despite the ups and downs in the history of Turkey's relations with western powers and comparatively less challenging relations with Russia, it is a valuable ally due to its geopolitical position, culturally closer relations with the Middle East and huge investment in defense technology (pp.35-38). I understand the logic in this argument, and it provides a non-Eurocentric good point of view. However, my major concern is the way the student structured the thesis and insufficient use of academic resources and factual data.

The thesis is structured in a way to inform the reader about the historical developments in terms of Turkey's relations both with western powers and Russia or Soviet Union. Why

should this matter for the main argument of the thesis? The student could have rather spent the energy on substantiating the three main issues in question and why these are important for seeing Turkey as a valuable ally. I was a little lost in reading the history and all those important events, such as the Menderes era, Turkey's intervention in Cyprus, Kardak crisis and so on... I like the idea of providing the historical background of Turkey's relations with the west (as well as its integration into NATO) and Russia but the big question is: how do they relate to the main argument of the thesis? I see some gap here.

Furthermore, I would have liked to see more academic resources showing Turkey's membership in the NATO and the 'values' that constitute NATO today. Understanding the identity of NATO is essential in answering the question of whether Turkey is should be considered as a valuable ally or not? Is NATO itself such a stable institution that does not go through change all these years?

I also think the thesis does not provide much reference to factual data, which gives the impression that the statements given in the thesis belongs to the authors own intuitive feelings rather than facts. An example, for instance, is this sentence on page 17: "Therefore it is safe to say that Türkiye's populace did not change through Erdoğan's era to an extent where it is viewed by those who think that Türkiye is no longer a country that can relate or operate together with the values and ideals that the North Atlantic Alliance operates in." How do we know? I would rather expect to see some public opinion polls showing the values of the Turkish population have not changed during the Erdogan era. Honestly, I think the opposite, the population has changed to a great extent based on what I observe in the polls and ethnographic studies. The student should have worked more with academic sources depicting the change in Erdogan era.

All in all, I think the arguments make sense but the evidence and the usage of resources fall short.

**Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F):** C

**Suggested questions for the defence are:**
1. Please check some public opinion polls between 2002-2023 (possibly the Eurobarometer data) before the defense and reassess your position whether there is

a change in Turkish society or not with regard to alignment with the West (or more specifically NATO). Do you see a difference?

2. Now that Erdogan is re-elected in Turkish election, what type of relationship do you foresee between Turkey as a member-state and NATO?

**Grading Scale:**

- A = 91-100 % – excellent
- B = 81-90 % – very good
- C = 71-80 % – good
- D = 61-70 % – satisfactory
- E = 51-60 % – minimal pass
- F = 0-50 % – fail